

away on November 30th at the age of 85. His funeral is tomorrow in Mt. Morris, Michigan.

Jack Wagner was a veteran of the U.S. Navy, serving in World War II aboard the destroyer USS *Sampson*. When the war ended he returned to the Flint area and began working for General Motors. He was active in the United Auto Workers throughout his career. Elected by his peers, Jack served as President of Buick Local 599 before becoming the International Representative for UAW Region 1-C, and Assistant Regional Director of Region 1-C. He was the National Chairman of the 30 and Out Committee that became part of the 1970 National Agreement and continued to serve as Honorary Chairman of the 30 and Out Committee.

Mourning his passing are his two sons, Bryan and Jack, his step daughter, Susan Norling, his sisters, Miriam Routely and Verda Mello, several grandchildren and great grandchildren, friends including Don Spillman, and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his wife, Dorothy, his son, Gary, and his sister, Mildred Burgoyne.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in remembering the life and work of Jack William Wagner. He was a committed, passionate advocate for working men and women; a devoted family man and a good friend. I will miss his wisdom, his insight, and his enthusiasm. My condolences go out to his family and friends at this sad time.

STATEMENT OF THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUS ON U.S.-TURKISH RELATIONS AND TURKISH AMERICANS

HON. ROBERT WEXLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2009

Mr. WEXLER. Madam Speaker, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. WHITFIELD and myself, as Co-Chairs of the Congressional Caucus on U.S.-Turkish Relations and Turkish Americans, Turkey Caucus, want to welcome Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to the United States. We believe the Prime Minister's visit reaffirms the longstanding strategic partnership between the United States and Turkey, and is a unique opportunity to enhance and foster economic, political, and security relations.

As many of our Congressional colleagues know, our NATO ally Turkey valiantly stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the United States and European partners throughout the Cold War. Over the past 20 years, Turkey has been integral to American and NATO efforts in the Balkans and has worked to enhance peace and stability in Central Asia and the Middle East. Turkey has also played a critical leadership role along with America and the international community in both Afghanistan and Iraq. We are hopeful that Turkey will continue to play a leading role alongside the United States, P5+1 partners and the international community with respect to Iran's nuclear program.

We also want to highlight and praise the historic steps recently taken by Prime Minister Erdoğan and his government to normalize Turkey's relations with its neighbor Armenia. With the support of the United States, both countries on October 10, 2009 signed two proto-

cols to achieve this goal. We believe that, with the continuing support of the United States and the international community, these protocols will provide a new impetus for the solution of other conflicts in the South Caucasus region.

Many of our colleagues appreciate the growing importance of our strategic relationship with Turkey which was described by President Obama during his visit to Turkey in April as a "Model Partnership." We are heartened by the fact that the Turkey Caucus, which began over 8 years ago, now numbers one hundred members.

The growth of the Turkey Caucus is a testament to the importance that members of Congress place on U.S.-Turkish relations and a recognition of the longstanding partnership between our two nations. Again, we welcome Prime Minister Erdoğan to Washington, and believe that his discussions with President Obama and the Administration will only serve to strengthen the U.S.-Turkish partnership as we face difficult global challenges.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2009

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Madam Speaker, this morning our national debt was \$12,090,825,003,370.26. We have increased the national debt \$1,598,537,727.69 since just yesterday.

On January 6, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$1,452,399,257,076.46 so far this year.

According to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, the forecast deficit for this year is \$1.6 trillion. That means that so far this year, we borrowed and spent \$4.4 billion a day more than we have collected, passing that debt and its interest payments to our children and all future Americans.

TRIBUTE TO DR. IRENE KHAN

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2009

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, the Obama Administration, in forging a new foreign policy that is more humane and less antagonistic towards other nations, would do well to follow the lead of the late Tom Lantos, who dedicated his life to the cause of human rights, an issue that has now become his legacy. Indeed, it is rare for the House to name an entity after one of its own, but the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, chaired by our colleague Jim McGovern, can rightly claim that distinction.

Throughout his public career, Tom Lantos and his wife, Annette, maintained a deep and enduring commitment to human rights. Among the members of this chamber, Tom Lantos was widely respected across the political spectrum for his knowledge of foreign policy

and commitment to human rights. The issue was the very core of his beliefs and his eloquent voice became this chamber's conscience on many international issues.

Few in today's world can match Tom Lantos' commitment and achievements in the cause of human rights, but if there were such a person, it would be Dr. Irene Khan, who in 2001 became the first woman, the first Asian, the first Bangladeshi and the first Muslim to hold the position of Secretary General of Amnesty International.

Dr. Khan's caring about human rights victims and the poor dates back to her native Bangladesh's early struggle for independence, as she witnessed widespread poverty and multiple threats to human dignity. It has been a combination of her personal outreach to human rights victims and case studies from around the world, combined with her professional involvement in U.N. Organizations, that led to her being selected to head Amnesty International.

In her recently published book, *The Unheard Truth*, Dr. Khan describes the divergent tracks of a fellow Bangladeshi who was born in the same household and she grew up with, and while Khan went on to be a successful lawyer, her friend, Fajal, suffered a lifetime of violence and unemployment, and is now disabled, living in a shack in one of Dhaka's sprawling slums, surviving on handouts.

For Dr. Khan, this is a grim reminder of how people remain hopelessly trapped in poverty, often due to circumstances beyond economic conditions but rather the result of political repression, famine, war, or simply the insecurity and fear inherent in their local surroundings.

In her book, Dr. Khan reveals a more acute understanding of the forces that bring about human rights abuses. Poverty, she argues, is more than the lack of material resources, it is all about fighting deprivation, exclusion, insecurity and powerlessness.

As the numbers of people living in poverty swell to upwards of 2 billion, she argues that poverty is the world's worst human rights crisis. By raising the issue of rights, Dr. Zhan is not pointing fingers but providing a formula for sustainable and equitable solutions, and giving people the means to change the power imbalance that keeps them in poverty.

To achieve Tom Lantos' vision of the banner of human rights waving "over every corner of the world," I recommend that international leaders adhere to Dr. Khan's compelling message on the need to empower the world's poor with the basic economic, social, political, and legal rights to assure them a strong voice in shaping their own future.

RECOGNIZING THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIP OF RICHMOND, VIRGINIA'S COLLEGIATE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. ERIC CANTOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2009

Mr. CANTOR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my Alma Mater, the Collegiate High School Football team on winning the 2009 Virginia Independent Schools Division I State championship. Led by Coach Mark Palyo, the Cougars compiled an impressive

10-1 record culminating in a 48-28 win over the Liberty Christian Academy Bulldogs in the Championship Game on November 21, 2009.

The Collegiate Cougars were successful in defending their state title which they have been awarded five out of their last seven seasons. I join the Richmond community, family and friends in proud recognition of the Collegiate High School Football team's fantastic achievement and undoubtedly bright future.

I commend the Cougars on their successful season and ask you to join me in celebrating their victory.

THE HONOR FLAG

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2009

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, the American Flag always brings our Nation together in good or bad times. Shortly after the tragic September 11, 2001 attacks on our great Country, Americans all over the world raised up 'old glory' in patriotic understanding of the events which had just befallen our country. One of these many flags was the symbol of our nation's perseverance, humbly flown over Ground Zero. This flag continues to fly today all around this great Nation in support of our heroes, because of Texas Patriot Chris Heisler.

In the wake of September 11th, Chris Heisler, felt compelled to take action after witnessing his country come under attack. Chris was instrumental in organizing one of the longest police motorcades in the history of the United States; carrying a flag that was gifted to him by the Texas House of Representatives he set out for Ground Zero. The American flag is a symbol to revere, respect, and honor and Chris' profound respect for America's symbol should be commended.

Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, patriotism surged in the United States. Many new recruits enlisted to help fight the war on terrorism. Chris Heisler was part of this movement, and at the age of 34 he put his business career on hold to enlist in the U.S. Army. While serving his country, Chris carried his revered flag with him to Kuwait, Qatar, and Iraq so it could fly with soldiers in combat zones.

Soon soldiers would refer to this flag as one of honor, and the flag is now named the United States Honor Flag. The United States Honor Flag continues to pay tribute to those who have lost their lives in the line of duty protecting the freedoms we all hold dear. Chris Heisler's patriotism is a lesson for us all.

Madam Speaker, betterment in our country often originates from the efforts of just one person. The establishment of the Honor Flag serves as an important reminder of the daily sacrifices our Nations heroes make, and recognizes the freedoms of Old Glory. In recognition of Chris Heisler's patriotism, in remembrance of the tragic events on September 11, 2001 and for those who continue to fight to preserve our liberty, I am proud to salute Chris Heisler for his loyalty to America, and to the United States Flag.

And that's just the way it is.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PATIENT HEALTH AND REAL MEDICATION ACCESS COST SAVINGS ACT OF 2009

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2009

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, prescription drugs are among the most expensive components of the American health care system. Unfortunately, the system for delivering drugs that has emerged since Congress created the Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit program continues to needlessly drive up these costs for taxpayers and consumers.

Failing on the promises to deliver prescription drugs more efficiently, effectively or at lower costs, pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, are reducing consumer choice and adding billions of dollars in costs for government and private health care plans.

As a result, today I will introduce the "Patient Health and Real Medication Access Cost Savings Act of 2009" to ensure cost savings, accountability and transparency. The bill will ensure that taxpayers, providers and patients can escape the mandates, secret pricing schemes, and marginal savings provided by PBMs in favor of an improved pharmacy model that guarantees choice, transparency and measurable savings.

Madam Speaker, nearly 60 large employers that collectively spend \$4.9 billion for prescription drugs recently dropped or forced PBMs to disclose their costs. The University of Michigan started the trend in 2005, and reported an annual savings of \$2.5 million when it dropped its PBM in favor of direct purchases. Officials at the University of Michigan are on record as saying that most of its derived savings came from eliminating fees from its former pharmacy benefit manager and from using the claims data to help school officials better negotiate prescription drug prices.

Additionally, companies like Caterpillar are leading the trend away from the PBM model. According to a recent report in CFO.com, Caterpillar's pharmacy benefit manager indicated that the company "found that there was a great deal of waste inherent in a system that uses PBMs as middle men."

This information led the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform's Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service, and the District of Columbia to hold a hearing on June 24, 2009 to assess the value PBMs are providing to the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP). At that hearing, the subcommittee chairman indicated, "federal employee plans pay substantially more for drugs than other agency programs, including those run by the departments of Veterans Affairs and Defense, and Medicare, Medicaid and the Public Health Service."

Mark Merritt, who represents PBMs as president of the Pharmaceutical Care Management Association (PCMA), told the subcommittee that PBMs contributed to an annual reduction in drug spending by the FEHBP of 3–9 percent. At the same hearing, however, Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Inspector General Patrick McFarland testified that the PBM contracts with FEHBP make auditing them "almost insurmountable."

There is no question that if Congress is to produce large savings as part of its efforts on

health care reform, it must challenge the PBM model that has emerged over the past few years with new models that contain costs and improve efficiency and transparency.

PCMA successfully lobbied Congress from 2001–2003 to allow PBMs to manage the massive new Medicare Part D drug delivery program. As a result of the industry's expanded market power, PBMs are now using new tactics to divert patients into higher-cost services, and to divert taxpayer savings into higher PBM profits. These practices represent a significant abuse of taxpayers and patients in the health care system. PBMs should be held accountable to taxpayers. No other providers in the health care sector are allowed to conduct business like PBMs.

With regards to patient data, pharmacists have complained for years to regulators that PBMs violate patient privacy laws by using their prescription data to push new products and steer patients to pharmacies owned by the PBMs. By comparison, physicians who "self-refer" to facilities they own face very serious legal liabilities. In addition, there is a concern that pharmacy benefit managers routinely sell patient drug histories to drug companies without the knowledge of patients, doctors or plan sponsors.

According to the Association of Community Pharmacists (ACP), patients receive letters every day from PBMs that use the confidential patient data pharmacies must collect to force them to move to pharmacies the PBMs own. ACP has collected thousands of petitions from patients who are asking Congress to stop this abuse of patient confidentiality. ACP has also collected actual letters to patients from PBMs that threaten to cut off pharmacy benefit coverage unless the patients fill their prescriptions at PBM-owned pharmacies.

In fact, PBMs have merged with pharmacy chains to accommodate this new marketing model, which relies on monopolization of drug care for patients in plans that are administered by the PBM. For example, CVS purchased the Caremark PBM company as soon as Congress passed the Medicare Part D program, which directs virtually all pharmacy services to go through PBMs. CVS/Caremark now mandates that all patients in its system use CVS exclusively to fill any prescriptions not mailed by Caremark. Patients who opt out, even if they are not near a CVS store, must pay 100 percent of their prescription costs regardless of how much they have paid in premiums for drug coverage. As a result, CVS now fills one of every seven prescriptions in the U.S.

PBMs also use predatory practices to steer patients away from competing pharmacies and into mail-only prescription drug services. For example, PBMs allow patients to obtain 90-day prescriptions—usually at big discounts—from their mail-order services. While this can be a bargain for patients, the retail pharmacies where patients may prefer to fill their prescriptions are prohibited from offering the same terms to the patient.

Coupled with the lack of enforcement action by the Federal Trade Commission, these PBM tactics are combined with a practice of systematic underpayment to any pharmacy that provides services to a patient whose drug benefit is managed by a PBM. The Association of Community Pharmacists has collected thousands of examples from pharmacies across the country that clearly demonstrate